Names of Allah

Lesson 1

Allah

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INTRODUCTION TO THE NAMES OF ALLAH

We will start the names and attributes of Allah SWT. There is a long introduction but إن شاء الله we will skip this introduction and we will start the names, to live with the names. We need these names in this difficult time. We need to know Allah SWT. Knowing Allah SWT is the best thing you spend your lifetime in. And you will be happy with this in Dunya and in Akhirah.

THE NAMES IN AL-FATIHAH

We will start with the name الله SWT and we will discuss the names that come in Al-Fatihah. So in al-Fatihah we have the following names.

We have الله, رب, and then we have الرحمن الرحيم and then we have مَلِك and مالِك.

And Allah, Rubb, ar-Rahman and ar-Rahim, as Ibn al-Qayyam says that they are the origin of all names. They are in al-Fatihah in salah, so it is also part of Tadabbur Sunnah (another course Ustadh Marwa teaches) in order to understand very well the names in salah.

WHY WE LEARNT ABOUT ALLAH'S NAMES

1 - WE LEARN ABOUT ALLAH TO HELP US WITH OUR IST'IANA

So in al-Fatihah Allah SWT said,

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ - 1:5

It is You we worship; it is You we ask for help.

And what is repeated, is established. So this is a rule. If something, even if you are not convinced, is kept repeated, repeated and repeated in front of you, it will be like a fact after a while. It will, SubhanAllah, unconsciously become a fact in your mind even whether it is something bad or something good. So here,

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ - 1:5

It is You we worship; it is You we ask for help.

We repeat it a lot, a lot, a lot.

Why?

In order to have this meaning in your heart and mind, to be deep rooted. So,

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ - 1:5

It is You we worship; it is You we ask for help.

Allah SWT did not create us in this Dunya to test our inner power. As I don't have a power in my own,

لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله

But Allah SWT created us to test the power of our isti'ana. So, life is difficult,

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ - 90:4

We have certainly created man into hardship.

We created man in hardship.

So this hardship is not to test your inner power. Because you don't have power at all. As the power is from Allah SWT. But the power of your isti'ana. How we will seek the help of Allah SWT in this difficult time, in this hardship. And this is for anything in your life but also the act of worship - 'ibadah.

They are like, they are attached to a rope. And this rope is the rope of isti'anah, seeking Allah's help and assistance. So this rope, you cannot pray without the help of Allah SWT. You cannot give sadaqah. You cannot go to Hajj. You cannot have any worship except by the help of Allah SWT. So if you have this rope in your hand, all the other acts of worship will be easy for you, and you will have the ability to do it. And each worship by the limbs, SubhanAllah, it is linked to a worship by the heart. And the worship of the heart, this is even the goal of the worship. You can find these. So as-Salah, what is the 'ibadah in the heart... Khushuah- humbleness. And Siyam, for example, what is the ultimate goal? Why we fast? In order to obtain Taqwa by the end of the month, Taqwa,

... لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ - 2:183

so that you may be mindful of God

So when you seek the help, you seek the help of whom?

The One who has full abilities SWT, over everything competent. He has the wisdom. He is al-Qayyum. He is the disposer of our affairs. So everything is in His Hand.

2 - OTHER REASONS WHY WE LEARN ABOUT ALLAH

Loving Allah, attaching to Him, fearing Him, glorifying Him

So also I learn about Allah SWT because this knowledge will bring about loving Allah, attaching to Him, fearing Him, glorifying Him. But if you learn only without having these fruits, this knowledge will not benefit you.

To derive from His perfection

We also learn the names of Allah SWT in order to derive from His perfection. So Allah is Jameel, Allah SWT is beautiful and He loves beauty. So you have to be beautiful to be…cleanliness in Islam, Allah loves these things. Allah is 'Aleem, so He loves scholars and people of knowledge. Allah SWT Qawiyy, Allah is powerful, so He loves the powerful believer over the weak one. Allah is Raheem and He loves the merciful slaves, as well to show mercy to the slaves and the creation. So this is again to derive from Allah's perfection. So Allah SWT, He loves to see the manifestation of His blessings over His creation.

So this is just about isti'anah. And we need to know Allah SWT.

As I said I will skip the introduction and we will start the name الله سبحانه وتعالى.

ALLAH

LINGUISTIC MEANING

So the linguistic meaning of الله, the scholars are different whether it is derived or not derived word.

DERIVED AND NON-DERIVED WORDS IN THE ARABIC LANGUAGE

So in Arabic, for example رحيم, all the names are derived, all of them. So Raheem, for example, we have

رحيم رحمن

All of them from the same root. We can derive, derivatives. So

رحمن رحيم راحم يرحم يرحمون ترحمون

A lot of patterns derived from this root.

But we have some certain words they are not derived. So only one word, you cannot have a different forms of verbs.

IS ALLAH DERIVED OR A NON-DERIVED WORD?

The scholars differ around whether it is a derived or non-derived word (it is a non-derivative; meaning there are no other patterns, or other words in Arabic, which has the same root as this). In Arabic, the derived word is more eloquent, so the most likely opinion is that it is a derived word.

WHAT WORD IS ALLAH DERIVED FROM?

The scholars then differed again, as to what is the root word of Allah. There are 5 opinions:

Opinion 1

أَلِهَ يَعْلَهُ

إِلَهَةً or

إِلَهِية

So this is the meaning

عَبَدَ يعبد عبادة

So it will be to worship. It could be like this.

Opinion 2

Or it could be another verb, which means that the minds are perplexed in understanding and absorbing the nature of Allah's Being SWT. As in Allah's saying, they cannot encompass Him in knowledge.

Opinion 3

Or it could be from another verb to mean, to seek Allah's refuge. So you don't have refuge for you except Allah SWT. So He is the one who removes the harm and saves you from any difficulty and you seek His help in order to attain everything you need in this life. And everything is in His hand.

Opinion 4

Or it could be لَاهَ لَيْهَا the verb itself it could be derived from this. And this to mean that there is a veil between us and Allah. We cannot see Allah in this Dunya. So Allah SWT said, visions perceives Allah, not in this dunyah.

Opinion 5 - Allah is from ilaah

Or the last opinion is that it is from Ilaah, Allah was originally Al-Ilaah then it underwent some changes till it become "Allah". Ibn Jarir at-Tabari and Sibawayye (Sibawayye is of course the famous scholar of Nahw; the Arabic grammar), and Ibn a-lQayyim also, and this is the most likely opinion.

THE MEANING OF THE NAME ALLAH

DEFINITION BY IBN ABBAS

We have one of the best definitions of Allah سبحانه وتعالى as a name of Allah سبحانه وتعالى, it is that of Ibn 'Abbas. If you know it in Arabic it will be great. Allah سبحانه وتعالى means;

ذو ألوهية و العبودية على خلقه أجمعين

The Possessor of divinity and worship over all creations.

Al-Aluhiyyah (الألوهية) is in relation to Allah and al-'Uboodiyyah (العبودية)is in relation to the slaves.

The First Part – The Possessor of Divinity

Allah سبحانه وتعالى is described by all the attributes of Uloohiyyah, which are all attributes of perfection. So He is perfect. And He is the only Ilaah, the only God, who is worthy of worship. No other one (god) deserves to be worshiped except Him and any other than Allah سبحانه وتعالى, is false.

Ilaah also that the slaves and whom the hearts of the slaves love and fear and humble and submit, hope, glorify, obey. So all these meanings are in Uloohiyyah, or the meanings of Uloohiyyah. And also that the hearts will not feel the peaceful and still and feel serenity and tranquillity except by His remberance and the minds will not by happy except by His knowledge; knowing about Him. Because Allah Subhanhu wa T'aala He is perfect, from absolute perfection. So no protector or supporter in reality except Him سبحانه وتعالى . So when you have to seek His refuge and to run to him out of longing, so you long

to Allah Subhanhu and you love Him. Because He is the perfect in His being, His attributes and actions. And no one you can feel happy with, except in His Company. And you never seize of His service or worshipping Him, and you will never get bored of His remembrance. There is no one to whom all the creation submit, and humble themselves and surrender except Him Subhnah. So this is meaning in relation to Allah سبحانه وتعالى . This was the explanation of the first part; Dhul-Uloohiyyah (ذوالألوهية)

Second Part - Dhul-'Uboodiyyah (ذوالعبودية)

Dhul-'Uboodiyyah; it is in relation to the slaves. So if this is the characteristics of Allah سبحانه وتعالى and He is perfect in all of them, so of course He deserves to be worshipped alone, سبحانه وتعالى . So al-'Uboodiyyah , means that we as slaves direct all our worships to Allah SWT. And Ibadah, as we studied is al-Fatiha, is to obey Allah سبحانه وتعالى by doing that what He commanded on the tongue of His Messengers. And 'Ibadah also could be the act of worship itself. Like Salah (صلاة) is 'Ibadah, Saum (صوم) is 'Ibadah, Khawf (خوف) is 'Ibadah; if it is even of the heart, Rajaa' (رجاء) is 'Ibadah, Muhabbah (محبة) is 'Ibadah and So on.

But Also 'Ibadah, it is to combine between, it is ultimate love with ultimate humbleness.

THE MEANING OF ALLAHUMMA (اللهم)

Firstly we will discuss some points.

Allahumma, you use it in du'a. You don't use Allahumma except that you will make du'a. So in Allahumma, the letter meem is a substitute for Yaa (يا) . Yaa is used for calling, in Arabic. If I want to call you, I will say, yaa Muhammad, or yaa Fatimah. So this meem that comes in Allahumma, is a substitute of Yaa, so Allahumma means Yaa Allah; You are calling Allah: Yaa Allah.

So we ask Allah SWT by this; Allahumma. So you ask by the name Allah under all conditions, and in every situation. And because it combines between all the characteristics and names and actions of Allah سبحانه وتعالى so I call Allah سبحانه وتعالى by His names, all of them, so for example;

اللهم إني عبدك

You can find a lot du'as starting with Allahumma because in order not to say all His names separately like , يا سلام، يا قدوس ، يا ملك، يا رحيم، يا رحمن . So you use all of them, if you just said, Allahumma, that means you called Allah by all His names.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ALLAH AND ILAAH

Now we will discuss some of the differences in Allah and Ilaah, in order to be clear in your mind

ALLAH

So Allah is exclusive to Allah سبحانه وتعالى . No one could be names Allah except Allah سبحانه وتعالى . And even the polytheists, they know this. Allah SWT says in Quran,

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ ... - 39:38

And if you asked them, "Who created the heavens and the earth?" they would surely say, "Allah."

ILAAH

Al-Ilaah, anyone or anything who is worshipped other than Allah سبحانه وتعالى . Anything that people worship other than Allah سبحانه وتعالى . So for example, the cow will be Ilaah for the Hindus, or 'Eesa عليه السلامwould be Ilaah for Christians. So a tree, anything. That is why you will find in كلمة التوحيد we have

لا إله إلا الله - There is no god worthy of worship .

Meaning there are or could be a lot of gods, but worthy of worship is only Allah سبحانه وتعالى. And this Uloohiyyah or Ilaahiyyah , meaning, in Arabic, no one has even a small share in this characteristic of Ilaahiiyah or Uloohiyyah. So that's why on one is worthy of this worship, so if you find anything, or anyone who is worshipped besides Allah in this dunyah, we need to ask ourselves a few questions then;

Is he Razzaq? Meaning does he provides or sustains you?

Is he the protector?

Is he all living or does he die?

Is he self-sufficient? So he is in no need of anyone.

So you can see, the whole Quran is built upon this. Any other than Allah سبحانه وتعالى does not have this perfection. So in order to know if this (false god) is the Ilaah who is worthy of worship, then it should have these characteristics of Ilaahiyyah and Uloohiyyah.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ALLAH AND RABB

Now we will move to the difference between Allah and Rabb.

TAWEED ULOOHIYYAH AND TAWHEED RUBOOBIYYAH

Off course we have in the 'aqeedah on Tawheed of Uloohiyyah and Tawheed of Ruboobiyyah, and I think, now you know understand the meaning of the both.

So Allah سبحانه وتعالى , He is worthy of our worship, whom the heart love, submit and glorify. So it is in relation to our actions.

Rabb, He is the sole creator, the sustainer, and disposer of our affairs. So tawheed Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala by His actions, this is Rabb.

No Razzaq except Allah, no giver in reality except Allah, no protector except Allah, The one who sends rain Allah, so to single out Allah in his actions, this is Tawheed Ar-Ruboobiyyah.

Tawheed Al-Uloohiyyah is to single Allah out in your actions, and it is built on Tawheed Ar-Ruboobiyyah. So, you don't pray except to Allah, you don't ask except to Allah, you don't sacrifice except for His sake, You don't love except Him, you don't hope except Him and everything comes secondary to this.

CONNOTATIONS (DALAALAT) OF THIS NAME (I.E. WHAT THIS NAME INDICATES)

Then the following, We have this in Tafseer, I hope you understand.

All of the Names they have denotations, some meanings.

So Allah, the word Allah, if it is used it will refer to Allah as His being, and to the characteristics of Ilaahiyyah or Uloohiyyah. If one of them is referred to, the other will be included. If you refer to Allah His being, the other one will be implied.

Then we have also Allah, if you know the meaning of Allah. This will necessitate, by necessity, it will indicate, and it will refer to all the names of Uloohiyyah. So, if you know Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala, in order to be a God worth of worship, you have to know that He should be all living. This will necessitate that He is Hayy, that He is Sustainer, that He brings life, causes death. He has the ultimate wisdom, and dwell. And The Qaiumiyyah, He is The Disposer, and He is Al Ghani, self sufficient. He is powerful, has encompassing knowledge, He has honor. So you cannot find Ilaah, who is in need. He will not be Ilaah, worthy of worship, if He is weak.

This is in Arabic. We have three meanings, Mutadakah, Tadamun and Luzum. Mutadakah exactly it refers to two things: Allah in His being and to the characteristics of Ilaahiyyah. If it is only one of them is mentioned, it will be Tadamun and the other one will be implied. This is Tadamun. Luzum necessitates or entails. So, if you know that Allah is worthy of worship, it will necessitate the other meanings, other meanings of Uloohiyyah.

SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS NAME

Then we have special characteristics of this name. Only this name, not any other name.

1 - MOST FAMOUS NAME

So, number one it is the most of the famous. Absolutely, this is most of the famous. It is most repeated in The Quran. This is one thing.

2 – IT IS THE ORIGIN OF ALL NAMES

Second one, is that it is the origin of all Names. All other names are added to it. And it is the description to it. We can find this in the Quran,

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ ... - 7:180

The Most Excellent Names belong to God

And,

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ - 59:23

He is God: there is no god other than Him, the Controller, the Holy One, Source of Peace, Granter of Security, Guardian over all, the Almighty, the Compeller, the Truly Great; God is far above anything they consider to be His partner.

All of this ayah is a description of Allah.

3 – IT REFERS TO ALLAH, HIS BEING, AND IT ENCOMPASSES ALL CHARACTERISTICS OF ULOOHIYYAH

Number three, that it refers to Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala, His being. and it encompass all the characteristics of Uloohiyyah. As we said it refers to all the characteristics. If you want to ask for certain things, you can use this name. So for Ar Rahman, it is about mercy. If you need Rizq, you will ask Ar Razzaq, only meaning, only the one meaning. If you need protection, you will ask, The protector, Al Wali and If you need support, An Naseer, helper and so on. So, only one meaning. But to encompass all the meanings, this is something special to Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala . But we have all the names, all the other names, they refer to one, one meaning only. We have some of the names, they are comprehensive, they include a group of meanings. But all the meanings, this is something special to Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala .

4 – YOU CANNOT SAY YOU ARE ALLAH, IT IS HIS EXCLUSIVE RIGHT

Number four, you can describe yourselves as any other name of Allah, like Jameel, you can say this is Jameela. And Rahema, Kareema, Al Kareem, Ar Raheem. So Al Hakeem, no problem, you can say I am Hakeem, I am wise. But for Allah you cannot say, you are, yani these characteristics Al Uloohiyyah, it is sole right to Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala . It is only exclusive to Allah and it is His rights only, exclusively to Allah. That's why this name, it is not for Takhalluq (to acquire good manners) – Khuluq (good manners and good conduct). As I said, Allah is beautiful and loves beauty. Allah is powerful and loves strong believers. But you cannot say, Allah is Allah and He loves what Uloohiyyah… Of course, this is again… So, this is not to be described by, but to be attached to. This name is not like others. Not to Have a share of these characteristics. Because we said there is no share at all of Uloohiyyah to other slaves.

5 – SHAHADA INCLUDES THE NAME ALLAH ONLY

Number five, Kalimattud Tawheed, that the Kalima which, yah! Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala! Allah created the heavens and the earth and us in order to know this word. To do what it necessitate from the act of worship and so on. And this is the word that all people who said this word, believing in the heart, they will enter Jannah and will be saved from the Hellfire and so on. This is Shahada. It is, you can find that, it includes this name only. So, this is from the special things of this name. So, La Ilaaha Illallah.

6 – ALLAH IS THE GREATEST NAME OF ALLAH (MOST LIKELY OPINION)

Number sixth, most likely opinion is that, Allah is the greatest name of Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala . If you call by this greatest name you will be answered. Allah will give you what you asked for.

7 – YOU CANNOT REMOVE THE 'AL'

Number seven, Allah is the only one that you cannot remove 'Al'. Al became the integral part of the word. You cannot remove it at all. Allah, it is Allah. But Ar Rahman, you can say Rahman. Al Kareem, you can remove Al. Al Ghani, you remove Al. So, any other name, As Samad, you remove Al. Al Maleek and so on. This is the only name also.

Tadabbur Point

We have something beautiful here, from tadabbur, you can derive something from this,

It is that, this knowledge will not be removed at all, Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala! You cannot remove Alif Laam, and Uloohiyyah it is something cannot be removed. It is something inherent in our fitrah. We have this in our fitrah that there is no God worthy of worship except Allah, La Ilaaha Illallah. We turn to Him, Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala! Even the Mushrikin, they turn to Him in the time of difficulty. Because, they return to their nature.

And this name, they said it is Awarif Ul-Ma'arif. Ma'arif for the people who study Arabic. Definite nouns. If you add Alif Laam, before any indefinite noun, it becomes definite. Kitab, Al kitab, the book. But here in order to refer to a certain book. But Awarif Ul-Ma'arif this is the most definite word ever. Even you don't need to prove that there is Allah. Because it is something that is already in our hearts, and we are created with this knowledge already, by our fitrah.

And the first one who was said this, that it is Awarif Ul-Ma'arif, the most definite, it refers to Allah. You know, I mean a specific book, when you add Alif Laam. A book, it is any book, but when you say Allah, it is the most definite. You refer to one, and no one else, Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala only. Sibawayye, the one who firstly said Awarif Ul-Ma'arif. And there is another one who saw in a dream after Sibawayye passed away, he said, that Allah forgave all of his sins because of this statement, that he said, Allah is Awarif Ul-Ma'arif.

So, there is no need even to prove, or to give some evidences of the existence of Allah. SubhanAllah, because it is something already known for everyone.

This is the just an introduction to this name. InshaAllah we will continue next time.

NOTE BY TRANSCRIBING TEAM

These notes are produced by the transcribing team, and reviewed by the transcribing team Editor. They may contain accidental errors. May Allah accept from us, and forgive our shortcomings.